RNI No. MAHBIL /2009/40123

सत्यमेव जयते

महाराष्ट्र शासन राजपत्र

असाधारण भाग पाच-अ

वर्ष १२, अंक ११] मंगळवार, मार्च १७, २०२६/फाल्गुन २६, शके १९४७ [पृष्ठे ३, किंमत : रुपये ३६.००

असाधारण क्रमांक १९

प्राधिकृत प्रकाशन

महाराष्ट्र विधानसभेत व महाराष्ट्र विधानपरिषदेत सादर केलेली विधेयके (इंग्रजी अनुवाद).

MAHARASHTRA LEGISLATURE SECRETARIAT

The following Bill was introduced in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly on the **17th March, 2026** is published under **Rule 117** of the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly Rules :—

L. A. BILL No. XXIV OF 2026.

A BILL

further to amend the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, in its application to the State of Maharashtra.

53 of 1972. WHEREAS it is expedient further to amend the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, in its application to the State of Maharashtra, for the purposes hereinafter appearing; it is hereby enacted in the Seventy-seventh Year of the Republic of India as follows :–

Short title and commencement.

1. (*1*) This Act may be called the Wild Life (Protection) (Maharashtra Amendment) Act, 2026.

(*2*) It shall come into force on such date as the State Government may, by notification in the *Official Gazette*, appoint.

Amendment of section 12 of 53 of 1972.

2. In section 12 of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, in its application to the State of Maharashtra, in the proviso,– 53 of 1972.

(*i*) in clause (*a*), after the words and figure "in Schedule I" the words, figures and letters "excluding Leopard *Panthera pardus* specified in entry at serial No. 43 in Part A: MAMMALS in Schedule I," shall be inserted;

(*ii*) in clause (*b*), after the words "any other wild animal" the words, figures and letters "including Leopard *Panthera pardus* specified in entry at serial No. 43 in Part A: MAMMALS in Schedule I," shall be inserted.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 (53 of 1972) provides for the protection of wild animals and for matters connected therewith or ancillary or incidental thereto with a view to ensure the ecological and environmental security of the country. This Act alongwith the Maharashtra Wild Life (Protection) Rules, 2014 and associated Forest Acts and Rules, contains stringent provisions to strengthen conservation of the wildlife. Due to strict conservation and protection measures, the population of wild animals especially leopards has been increasing in the State.

2. In many forest areas of the State, population of the leopard has increased beyond carrying capacity of that area. This often leads to fights amongst them for territorial supremacy, in which weaker leopard leaves the territory and get displaced into non-forest areas adjacent to the forests.

Leopards are highly adaptable and opportunistic predators with respect to their habitat needs and food requirements, therefore they are found in agricultural fields, trees and bushes and near human habitation. Leopards have established such areas as their territories and they also breed in such non-forest regions. The survival rate of leopard cubs is more compared to other cubs of wild animal of felidea family. Such leopards come to human habitat for domestic animals who are easy prey for them and also attack humans leading to frequent and escalating human-wildlife conflicts.

3. Section 12 of the said Act provides that the Chief Wild Life Warden may with the previous permission of the Central Government, grant permit for hunting (which includes capture and relocation) in respect of any wild animal specified in Schedule I of the said Act, for the purposes of scientific management which includes translocation of any wild animal to an alternative suitable habitat, population management of wild life, etc. Leopard is specified in entry 43 in Schedule I appended to the said Act. Therefore, in cases of human-leopard conflict the Chief Wildlife Warden cannot take steps for population management or translocation of leopards under the said section 12 without permission of the Central Government. This highly regulated cumbersome process is time consuming and causing delay in effective scientific management and translocation of leopards as well as in dealing with human- leopard conflict in the State.

The Government, therefore, considers it expedient to amend section 12 of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, suitably, to enable the Chief Wildlife Warden to take necessary steps for scientific management of leopards which include translocation and population management with the permission of the State Government.

4. The Bill seeks to achieve the above objectives.

Mumbai,
Dated the 16th March 2026.

GANESH NAIK,
Minister for Forests.

Vidhan Bhavan :
Mumbai,
Dated the 17th March 2026.

JITENDRA BHOLE,
Secretary-1,
Maharashtra Legislative Assembly.

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